

Descent 1251

Chapter 1251 Missed Chance

Wise Star Order was really his unlucky star. Leonel rarely experienced embarrassment in his life, and he definitely didn't feel it to a deep degree even when he did. But, now, this was already twice in just a few days he had.

There was no coincidence, he blamed the old bastard. Unfortunately, he didn't get to linger on these thoughts for long because almost the exact instant Aina left once more, a loop of pain and relief seemed to take Leonel's life over completely.

In the Third Dimension one formed their Nodes, and the Fourth not only did you strengthen the body, but you also forged Nodal Pathways. After the initial Third Dimension, there were only the bare bone connections between your Nine Nodes, so it was up to the individual to complete what was essentially a new organ system.

Leonel had, of course, done this long ago. He had spent many months in the Dimensional Cleanse trial world and had taken the time to finish there. But, those new pathways had never been used at all.

The good news was that as Leonel's body grew stronger, so did they. The bad news was that the sudden and novel feeling sent his body into a state of shock that was hard to recover from.

When the pain reached its peak, the Cleansing Waters would see to take action and Leonel would find himself on cloud nine, only for the pain to cycle back again. It was almost like having a pulsing migraine that tricked you into believing that it was gone every few minutes, only for it to come back the moment you shifted your head the slightest bit.

All this time, Wise Star Order had completely tuned Leonel out. Even now, he was in a state of shock.

'Stealing energy from the Regulator... They always theorized that this was the only way past the glass ceiling, but no one had ever succeeded. It really took a brat who didn't know the word fear to do it... How many geniuses are rolling in their graves right now...'

Wise Star Order knew Leonel had done it completely by accident... Or had he?

'His father...'

Wise Star Order's gaze narrowed. Was it really luck?

He had never heard of someone being able to regrow an Innate Node. From the very beginning, an Innate Node wasn't something normal people should have. This was why a birth was followed by a Phenomena. If Leonel's father wasn't as powerful as he was, Leonel would have been smited the moment he was born.

Innate Nodes were already at the limit of the Regulator's tolerance, and that was especially so for Scarlet Star Force in specific. So the question was...

How the hell could you regrow such a thing?

'There's one more variable in all of this that I didn't consider. I dismissed it because he called it something as ridiculous as a 'vomit brew', but what if the trigger for this wasn't his stupidity, but rather his father's genius?

'Regrowing an Innate Node should be impossible. But, if I had to speculate about one thing that would be capable of doing so... It would be the energy of the Regulator.'

Wise Star Order's mind spun. He was a man who had seen so much of the world and yet he still had fear for Leonel's father. After all the crap he had spoken about how weak the Human Domain was, he still felt this way. Leonel was simply unaware of the kind of man his father really was, and what it was that he represented.

As the hours waned, Leonel's labored breathing didn't seem to slow.

True to her word, Aina did return with dinner as dusk approached, but when she saw Leonel still unmoving, her brows furrowed lightly. By this point, the basin which had once been filled with clear water was now filled with a thick, violet liquid that gave off a foul smell that had ruined the ambience of the entire room.

Aina was instantly able to tell that it was impurities and waste. But, that should have been completely black. This dark purple didn't make sense.

But then it hit her. 'Blood...'

Leonel had actually bled to the point of turning the entire basin of water from a pitch black to a dark violet. She had no idea what he was doing, but a tinge of worry couldn't help but flicker in her eyes.

Aina used her Blood Force affinity to form Leonel's blood into a vessel to shuttle the water and impurities out. It was only at that point that she noticed that Leonel had actually been using Cleansing Waters, something that only left her more baffled.

Cleansing Waters were among the purist substances in all of existence. Even when her curse was acting up, it had evaporated in these waters as though it had never been there. Logically, with the self-cleaning ability of Cleansing Waters, something like what was happening now shouldn't have been possible.

Still, Aina didn't stall. She found the Segmented Cube to the side and filled the basin with Cleansing Waters once more. After another look toward Leonel, she left silently. Maybe she didn't even realize how unbothered and unfazed she had been by his naked body.

What neither Aina nor Leonel knew at this point, was that Wise Star Order was truly speechless by this point. He could hardly wrap his head around just how lucky this body was.

He should have known that stealing energy from the Regulator wasn't so simple, it seemed that there had indeed been ill effects. However, because Leonel made the choice to seal his Nodes away, it had never taken deep root.

That foul energy that was able to make even Cleansing Waters murky was known as Anarchic Force. Though it had a name that could be considered quite interesting, it was nothing but a death sentence.

Anarchic Force didn't follow the laws of the universe as it should. It was considered to be the throw away Force of the universe, the Force that had no use other than to take up space, stir chaos and act as a leech. In the simplest terms possible, it was unusable energy and it was a cancer.

All Force tended toward Anarchic Force and there were even theories that once all Force had reached this state, the universe itself would die.

For a Force user, having this stuff in your body was like a human suffering radiation poison.

'Dammit. I missed another chance to kill him.'

Chapter 1252 Tier 9

It took Leonel several days before he could feel something outside a perpetual cycle of pain. Even the soothing effect of his Cleansing Water only made the torture worse because it continued to remind him of what it felt like to not experience heartrending pain day in and day out.

When it finally came to a stop, Leonel's body felt so weak that he directly fell asleep again, unable to move. He didn't know that he had another close shave with death, nor did he know about Anarchic Force. All he knew was that he needed sleep... And hopefully food when he woke up.

...

Leonel didn't feel particularly good when his eyes finally opened once more. It felt like a cross between him having slept for too long and yet somehow not enough. His head was foggy and his body felt as though it had been put through hours of torture. Though... That was exactly what had happened.

'... I feel like crap.'

Leonel shook his head, his eyes taking much longer to adjust to the light than it should have.

He realized he was naked, but he was far too lazy to do anything about it. Just moving his limbs around make him feel as though he had torn every muscle fiber in his body. For the first time in a while, he didn't even feel immediately hungry either.

After so long suppressing himself, this was an inevitable reality Leonel was forced to face. It was as though he had let a wound scab over, but had now picked it clean once again to allow it to heal properly.

Despite this, though, Leonel felt an overwhelming power rushing through his veins. It took him a while to register it because of how crappy he felt. But, once he did, he suddenly couldn't take his mind off of it, it had practically consumed him.

'This much...?'

To Leonel's surprise, the largest change wasn't even to his Force and Force Nodes. Rather, it was to his Metal Body and Metal Synergy Lineage Factor.

What Leonel hadn't realized was that his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor was like a separate organ system all to its own as well. The Runes that grew across his body could be considered to be manifestations of said organ system.

However, this organ system was special in that it could be activated and deactivated. While in its deactivated state, it was much weaker and as such, Leonel's body was far more susceptible to harm than it would be otherwise. This was why Leonel's defenses were so much greater when his Bronze Runes were visible.

What Leonel had never considered was the mechanism behind this.

When one thought about it, didn't Leonel's defenses come from his Metal Body? Since that was a technique he trained in, why did it matter whether his Bronze Runes were activated or not?

The answer to that question lied in the method by which the Metal Synergy Lineage Factor circumvented many of the weaknesses that usually came with defense Lineage Factors like heavy weight, slow speed, and low flexibility.

The Bronze Runes were an amplification measure that relied on Force to synergize with Leonel's Metal Body and bring out its true strength while not hampering him as much as other Lineage Factors would.

To make something that was extraordinarily complex, simple... Leonel's Bronze Runes needed his Nodal Organ System to display their full potential!

Why was it that the Morales Clan elders had freaked out when Leonel tried to Awaken his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor before forming all nine of his Nodes? It was precisely because this foundation was extraordinarily important toward setting a wielder of the Metal Synergy Lineage Factor up for success.

Leonel raised his hand to his face.

A slight discomfort and a bloated feeling coursed through him as he activated his Bronze Runes on it. And, after just a moment of observation, he sucked in a cold breath.

'My Metal Body now with my Bronze Runes deactivated is about as strong as it was before with Runes. And now, with my Bronze Runes activated in full force, my defenses are three to five times greater than they had been before.'

If before Leonel could match up to lower tier and lower quality Fifth Dimension weapons in hardness with his Bronze Runes activated, now it wouldn't be guaranteed that even a Quasi Sixth Dimensional blade could harm him.

'... Wow...'

Leonel had always been underwhelmed by his Tier 9 Metal Body. He had used the Silver Tablet to accelerate his progress toward it, but he never felt the sort of invincibility it should have. People seemed to be able to harm him far too easily and the gap between him and Myghell still felt difficult to bridge.

Leonel had dismissed this odd feeling of his because he was used to his Metal Body being weaker than normal. Back when he was in the Third Dimension, his Fourth Dimensional Metal Body was also lacking. So, he had just assumed that it was because his Dimension Tier was lagging behind it once again.

He didn't realize until now that he was shooting himself in the foot. The Metal Synergy Lineage Factor in conduction with the technique represented the strongest defensive Lineage Factor in the whole of the Human Domain. There was no other that came even close. The Morales were untouchable in this aspect.

With a Tier 9 Metal Body and his Bronze Runes activated, considering the fact Leonel had opened all Nine Nested Doorways of the Fifth Dimension, harming him should have been as extraordinarily difficult task.

To explain things as simply as possible... To the current Leonel, unless you could display Sixth Dimensional strength, you should forget about leaving even the slightest mark on his skin so long as his Bronze Runes were activated. It was as simple as that.

Leonel tried to take a deep breath but his heart and lungs protested almost immediately. He settled for more shallow breathing, his eyes looking toward empty space.

Somehow, this only felt like the tip of the iceberg. Just what else had he missed out on?

[Just two today, everyone... *sprints away*]

Chapter 1253 More

The next change Leonel felt was to his brain activity.

Leonel's intelligence was always a fairly unique thing and didn't exactly work like everyone else's did. According to Leonel's father, Leonel's ability had awoken long before everyone else of Earth. This was because Leonel had been born on Planet Luxnix and not Earth like his mother had been.

For his own reasons, Velasco had sealed Leonel away, restricting him from accessing his ability too soon. This was exactly why the Force distribution during the Awakening had only left such a small sliver for Leonel. He didn't need to be given his ability as he already had it.

However, even sealed, Leonel's intelligence had still been beyond most. Though, not as exaggerated as it was now.

Leonel had been in Class A of Royal Blue Academy, a great feat. But, he had been third in his Class, behind Aina and Allan.

There were maybe a few reasons for this, but the main reason was because of the Ascension Empire's restrictions on books and knowledge. Leonel wasn't allowed to return with his books home as he lived on a Paradise Island and as such, he didn't get nearly as much time to study as others who lived on campus.

But, even with this being true, the reality was that things just didn't click as easily for Leonel then as they did now. He was always lacking in something and that was greatly related to his Ability.

In the Dimensional Verse, there could be considered to be two roots of Intelligence. The first was the soul and the second was the brain. The two interacted with one another through the Ethereal Glabella which could also be considered to be part of the brain, as it was located in the prefrontal cortex of human anatomy.

Due to his father, Leonel had lost his connection with his Ethereal Glabella. As such, he was left with just his brain, leaving him on the same playing field as everyone else... Or so it seemed.

The main issue here is that Leonel's brain was fundamentally different from the brains of everyone else on Earth. The Spear Domain Lineage Factor rearranged the neural connectivity in his cortex, giving him different anatomy than one would expect to find in a person of Earth.

While most people of Earth had a prefrontal cortex designed purely for higher level functioning, thought and reasoning, Leonel's own was wired ... for battle with a spear.

The amount of energy allocated to this much more complex interconnectivity left little to the rest of Leonel's mind. And, on top of that, his Lineage Factor hadn't even awoken then so it was like a continuous siphon of energy toward a bottomless pit of uselessness. And, as though that wasn't bad enough, he didn't have his Ethereal Glabella which would have been the best power source for it all...

It quite literally made Leonel dumber.

But why was it that this was all important now? After all, Leonel's Ethereal Glabella was just fine and now that he could use Dream Force, the fuel his brain had was far beyond that of 99% of most people...

The important thing to consider here is that the brain and the soul had a dependency on one another. Neither was more important than the other. And... Leonel just so happened to have had a Force Node in his brain stem that had been muted all this time, only for it to suddenly be flooded with energy.

It was at that moment that Leonel realized his groggy mind wasn't only because of all the pain he had experienced, he quite literally had a concussion right now, and quite a severe one at that.

Using his Brain Stem as a root, while within the Fourth Dimension, Leonel had taken advantage to route countless Nodal Pathways through his brain and now they were all swollen and made his head feel as though it might explode at any moment.

And yet... Leonel felt that his mind was on a completely different level than it had ever been.

Without even checking, Leonel felt that his number of split minds had increased tenfold... From ten million, he could control over a hundred million now and he wasn't even sure if that was the limit or an artificial cap he didn't dare to blow by because this migraine was hunting after his life.

The largest change other than this was in Leonel's Control ability.

It had to be remembered that Tier 4 of Leonel's Ability Index was Control. This Tier represented a perfect control over one's body, far greater than most could exhibit. This was the Tier Leonel's Dream Sense technique came from, allowing him to dull his senses to mute pain or maximize his sleep by spreading it across numerous minds.

Right this moment, Leonel felt that his Control Tier had taken an enormous step forward. Even with the foggy state of his mind, he felt he could accelerate and decelerate his heart on a whim, he could quicken his digestion by diverting energy toward it, he even felt that he could grasp signals his neurons were firing toward his mind before they even made it to his brain.

It was as though his entire body had become a hive mind. And, if Leonel's deductions were correct, once the swelling of his brain went down and he could finally think clearly again, he might even be able to reach down a cellular level.

He didn't think it would be easy and it would definitely require large amounts of focus and energy, but if he could pull that off, the possibilities were endless.

He would be able to direct his passive healing factor toward specific regions to accelerate cell regrowth even faster. He might be able to take control of his stem cells to regrow limbs or circumvent injuries his healing factor alone wouldn't be able to handle. He would be able to change the composition of his muscle so they could exhibit more power per fiber length than they could in the past...

And, the largest elephant in the room, he might truly be able to reach a point where he could improve and modify his Lineage Factors.

Of course, Leonel had learned how naïve he was to even think of doing so in the past. But, this really did open up that door once again! The prowess of the Control Tier of his Ability Index was something he had clearly greatly underestimated until this point.

None of this even touched the fact that Leonel felt as though his Spear Domain Lineage Factor was clearer to him now than it ever had been in the past. Even his breakthrough against Myghell didn't make things feel this obvious and compatible with him.

With Force coursing through his brain, his Spear Domain Lineage Factor mutations finally got the sort of support it was always meant to, making him feel as though he couldn't bear to use any weapon outside of a spear, like it would be a waste of his ability to even spend time doing so...

And yet, it still felt like there was more, as though he was still seeing just the tip of the iceberg.

Chapter 1254 wouldn't it?

With the distribution of his Nodes, Leonel realized that the Control he had over his body was amplified many times over.

If he wanted to control his digestion, he had a Node there that could be used. If he wanted to control his heart, he had another two Nodes there. If he wanted to control his blood and purify it, he had his kidneys. Even if he wanted to breathe better and react faster, he had Nodes in his lungs and spine.

It wasn't until now Leonel truly grasped how good his decisions from back then were. At the very least, his Simulations had not failed him and had only proven to be more accurate, an outright miracle considering just how many things he had gotten wrong.

The only shame here was that even Leonel's passive healing factor was taking forever to bring him back up to speed and he didn't even have the energy to move. He couldn't even enjoy his improvements. It just felt like his body was collapsing.

He knew he needed food, but he couldn't even stand right now, let alone eat. Plus, he wasn't sure if his stomach could even handle a high dose of food right now because it was among the places in his body that he had flooded with Nodal Pathways.

Leonel had half a mind to use Dream Sense to induce a coma in himself until he could wake up, but his better judgment made him decide against it. Who knew if there other twists waiting for him?

Though Wise Star Order hadn't explained, Leonel could feel that there was something odd in his body. Part of the reason he had pushed himself so far was to ensure he had gotten it all out, but what had scared him was that even with his senses, he hadn't been able to detect it.

That mysterious black Force... It was as though it wasn't there at all. Even when it was floating around Leonel like it had been, even when he could see it with his own eyes, it was as though it was nothing more than a figment of his imagination.

"What was that thing?"

Leonel's voice came out hoarse. It had no umph to it at all, making it seem like it had been stripped of all of its base.

"Anarchic Force."

"..."

Leonel didn't answer for a long while, almost as though he was searing the fear he had felt for that Force in his mind. It seemed capable of swallowing everything. If not for the Cleansing Waters neutralizing it somewhat, he didn't know what he would have done.

"... I don't know how my Scarlet Star Force can embody destruction if that thing exists."

Wise Star Order shook his head. "It doesn't destroy. It consumes and erases. At least when you're destroyed, some semblance of what you once were remains. Broken pieces, ash, a mark in the land... When Anarchic Force moves through, it leaves nothing but the void."

"The Void Battlefields are filled with that stuff, aren't they?"

Wise Star Order was taken aback. "How'd you guess that?"

Leonel wanted to shrug, but he didn't have the strength to, nor did he want to experience the pain that came with it. His Dreamscape had drawn the conclusion for him.

The speed his mind worked at now was leagues beyond where it had been in the past.

"I felt like your choice of the word void wasn't coincidence. Plus, if there was anything that could weaken my Ability with its presence alone, it feels like Anarchic Force is it.

"Your Ability is probably something bestowed upon you by the Regulator, right? And I assumed that the only way for that Force to have gotten into my body without my knowledge was as some sort of retaliation by the Regulator. So, making the leap wasn't too difficult."

Wise Star Order shook his head. 'This brat got smarter. How annoying.'

"You shouldn't think of the Regulator as a person."

"Why not?"

Leonel didn't refute his Ancestor. He realized after Wise Star Order said it he had subconsciously begun to think of the Regulator as a singular existence.

"Because it's the pinnacle of arrogance to do so."

Leonel chuckled, but it quickly turned into a wheezing, coughing hybrid.

"You laugh, but that's only because you know it's true. Personifying the will of the universe is just a coping mechanism, it makes you think that you can defeat it and overcome it, when in reality, it gave birth to all that is. The comprehensions you've grasped are all innately known by it, the Abilities you're bestowed are created by it, the Force you use to strengthen yourself it are produced by it...

"Even if it was a person, it would be something beyond a God. The quicker you learn that, the greater chance you'll have to live."

A rare solemn tone came from Wise Star Order. He was usually deciding between losing his mind and picking which insult to throw at Leonel next, but this time, he was as serious as he could be.

Leonel fell into a deep silence, his mind wondering from place to place but always seeming to return back to Wise Star Order's words. The silence between the two lasted hours and maybe even Wise Star Order himself thought that Leonel had just accepted his words and left things alone.

The light of day waned and Aina even came once again. Seeing the situation that Leonel was in, she seemed to be able to tell exactly what he needed at a glance and prepared it. There was a delicate sort of silence between the two as she fed Leonel spoonfuls of soup, not even giving him the chance to reject her kind intentions.

Once she was finished, she smiled and left the room even as the lights of dusk finally faded to black... And it was only then that Leonel spoke words froze Wise Star Order completely.

"If I unite the Dimensional Verse and make the power the Regulator bestows meaningless, wouldn't I be the Regulator then?"

Chapter 1255 So There's...

Wise Star Order finally realized this kid was insane.

This was why the distinguishment between whether Leonel 'understood', or if he truly understood, was so important. Wise Star Order was certain that it was the latter, Leonel knew exactly what he was facing, and even took as much as half a day to think about it, and those were the first words he had said!

He was a madman!

'It's the Scarlet Star Force Innate Node, it has to be. Only someone born with that thing could be so clinically insane. I might not even get a chance to live out the rest of my life in peace, this kid is going to be the death of me.'

...

Leonel fell asleep not long after he spoke those words, leaving Wise Star Order to wallow in his own sorrow.

The days continued to pass and Leonel felt a bit better day by day. He had no idea that their return to Void Palace had been delayed because of him. Once again, his mother put her son first and ignored everything else.

While this would be fine for the Selection... The return to Void Palace was a bit more complex. It was suffice to say that there'd be quite a few unsatisfied people when the time came. But, the current Leonel was still oblivious to the coming danger.

Regardless, Alienor would never allow Leonel to go out and fight in such a state. Even if it took a year, they could wait until her son was ready.

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"Alright, old bastard. Don't you think it's about time you told me what you've been hiding about the Bronze Tablet?"

Wise Star Order snorted. "What makes you think I've hidden anything."

"I'm sure you have. You had to play the part of helpless elder. It was a bad choice if you asked me, if you gave me knowledge beyond the scope of the Bronze Tablet, I would have been more inclined to believe you. But, then again, too much knowledge and I would have suspected you anyway."

"It's all because I didn't think you'd be so stupid. If I knew you were so ignorant to the ways of the Dimensional Verse, you think I'd waste my time? I could have pulled a book of fantasy from my ass and fed it to you and you would have believed it."

Leonel's lip twitched, but he didn't refute. Wise Star Order was probably right, at least in part.

"Just start with the simple stuff, are there really only three beasts? Is there nothing after the Starry Tailed Fox? And tell me what you really know about its Lineage Factor and how it works."

"So greedy. You haven't even mastered one yet but you're concerned about the others."

Leonel shook his head. "In these last few days, even without going to the Bronze Tablet, I've felt all my bottlenecks loosen. If I wasn't holding them back for fear for what they'd do to my body, I probably would have cleared all Third Awakenings for all three branches by now and maybe even touched upon the Fourth."

With Leonel released his Nodes and Nodal Pathways, the purifying effect his Kidneys had on his blood had shot up astronomically. Because his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor was located in his blood, the synergy of the two events was ridiculously high. Leonel didn't even feel he needed to take the Bronze Tablet with him.

Wise Star Order could only roll his eyes. Where was his thank you? This brat had no respect.

"The Bronze Tablet is more than just about increasing the pace of Awakening. Without it, you wouldn't be able to feel the gateway to the next Lineage Factor even if you awakened it fully. In addition, most of the techniques of the Luxnix, including our Force Art System, are just derivative and fragmented understandings that come from the Bronze Tablet."

Leonel's eyes lit up. "So you mean I don't have to form techniques from the ground up?"

"No. So long as you have enough comprehension it shouldn't be a problem."

This was a huge sigh of relief for Leonel. This was one of the things he had felt the most worried about.

"Then the Starry Tailed Fox?" Leonel asked.

"I lied back then, the Starry Tailed Fox doesn't have four branches. Rather, it has the standard three the Snowy Star Owl and the White Stone Elephant had. Instead, it's just that its Wisdom Branch evolves into something more profound and becomes the Wisdom Spirit Branch. So, it has the Speed Branch, the Healing Branch, and finally the Wisdom Spirit Branch, each with four Awakenings of their own."

"What's so different about it?"

"Why do you care so much now? You're nowhere close to it."

"I'm probably closer than you think. Just answer the question, old man."

"... From what I can tell, the Wisdom Spirit Branch is heavily related to the soul. You've seen what benefits sensing your soul for the first time gave you, it'll be similar but likely manifold more potent."

"... I see." Leonel nodded. "Then there's probably evolutions of Healing Branch waiting in the future, right? It's the only one that appears just as frequently as the Wisdom Branch."

"Even I don't know the answer to that. I only have vague information about the next two."

"Oh? What are they?"

"The Twinkling Light Bear and the Golden Tiger."

"The Bear sounds like another strength based creature, similar to the elephant."

"Likely yes. If it alternates between speed and strength like this, there's probably a reason. I just don't know what it is."

"... Five feel incomplete." Leonel suddenly said.

"The Silver Tablet I saw, though I could only meditate on it for a moment, definitely only had two creatures within it, there wasn't another."

"Is there a... Golden Tablet?" Leonel asked.

"I am uncertain. The only other Tablet I've ever seen was yours, but it seems to function very differently from the Lineage Factor tablets..."

"What I can say is that you are likely right, five is incomplete. If there are these creatures, and each has their own shadow... Then I would have to guess that there are 12 total, one for each point of the Northern Star..."

"So there's a sixth."

"So there's a sixth." Wise Star Order confirmed.

Chapter 1256 Adorable

Leonel wasn't too surprised by this. Quite frankly, whether there were five or six hardly mattered to him. The only reason a sixth would be an intriguing prospect if its power was truly beyond that of the Golden Tiger.

According to Wise Star Order, the Starry Tailed Fox was already considered to be at the pinnacle of Seventh Dimension, what about this Golden Tiger? And what about this mysterious seventh beast?

Leonel was definitely intrigued.

"What Dimensional level were they at?"

"It's a similar pattern. The Twinkling Light Bear was Eighth Dimensional. The Golden Tiger was most definitely pinnacle of the Eighth Dimension. As for the other details, I'm not sure."

"You found this in the Domain of the Spirituals?"

Wise Star Order laughed. "Brat, in other Domains, humans unlucky enough to be there are treated no differently from slaves. A lot of time, they quite literally are a Slave Class. You going over there is no different from giving your life away.

"You wouldn't even be able to step foot in the regions something so precious would be held, let alone making it to the point of laying your eyes on it."

Leonel frowned. "Slaves?"

"Oh? Are you mad? You should get over that hero's complex really quick. That nonsense you said about uniting the Dimensional Verse is never going to happen. Your Domain is just lucky that it mostly produces Humans thanks to the Regulator you apparently want to replace. If not, humans wouldn't even have a place in the universe."

"I feel like you're exaggerating. Anyone with half a brain knows how evolution works. For a race to survive so long into the lifespan of the universe, and even control a Domain all to itself, it can't possibly be weak or else it would have been rooted out a long time ago. But you're making it sound like humans have no redeeming qualities."

"Humans do have redeeming qualities. Too many, in fact. But that's the problem. There's no universal path for Humans to take, so instead of putting all your efforts toward excavating one thought, you all diverge. There's no greater example of this than the Lineage Factor.

"How many Lineage Factors are in the Human Domain? Hundreds? Thousands? Millions is probably the more accurate denomination. Each of you is trying to figure out how a different path works, diverging along countless lines of evolutions, instead of streamlining it all into one large and cohesive effort.

"When I say humans are untalented and are far behind everyone else, I don't mean that there's a literal objective metric by which you're worthless. It's the insatiable appetite of humans and their neutral foundations that ruin everything.

"Humans can be great at everything, and that's exactly why they're great at nothing."

Leonel frowned. He felt that Wise Star Order was speaking the truth and he could feel that it made perfect sense. But, even with his improved thinking speed and computational ability, he couldn't even begin to guess at how to unravel that problem and solve it.

"The Void Palace is maybe the only decent attempt humans have made to form a cohesive ideology. It helps geniuses worth investing in to focus in on the God Path. Though there are plenty of powerful

individuals who've taken the conventional path, there's a reason that the God Path is still conventionally known as the better of the two.

"However, even that's become a shit show. There's only so many resources you're all willing to pool into a neutral party that will take away from your own strength, so there's limited spots. And because the spots are limited, only the extremely talented even have a chance to claim a spot for themselves.

"Once they get into the place, they'll be bombarded with politics and bullshit from all sides. Unless you're both talented and come from a strong family, you'll find yourself rattling within someone else's cage soon enough.

"If by some miracle they manage to make it through all of that and reach the highest echelons, they'll become another useless old fogie sitting on their high horse thinking themselves to be invincible because they reached the peak of the Human Domain. Or, they'll end up siphoning most of the resources they earned back to their families to fuel more diverging paths into the future.

"Even if you sat humans down and tried to explain this, they wouldn't listen. How would you even decide which Lineage Factors to abandon and which to focus on for the good of the whole human race? And, even if you could decide, would that family agree to share their Lineage Factor with everyone? Why should they share? If their Lineage Factor was the best, shouldn't you all just submit?"

Wise Star Order seemed to be very passionate about this matter, to the point it even brought a smile to Leonel's face. Though the old man called his dream ridiculous, judging by how much effort he had put into making sure the Luxnix family would follow his lead into the future, it was likely that, at one point, he shared a dream not too dissimilar to his own.

"It's not the humans are so much more stupid or selfish than other races. Every race is selfish and is out for their own selves. The difference is that most of the races are only good at one or two things, so all of their Lineage Factors converged toward the same evolutionary peak. But this isn't a luxury humans have.

"But if you know your weakness, then you should try harder than others to fix it! FUCK! I hate stupid people."

Wise Star Order ended up ranting to himself. He had riled himself up so completely that he completely forgot about Leonel entirely.

"Once Earth enters the Eighth Dimension, it's all over. All these years of wasting time and shilling for their own personal gain is going to end with the human race being completely wiped out and enslaved.

"But all they're worried about is conquering a piece of Earth for themselves. Useless piles of trash, I'd kill them all if I have the chance."

Leonel erupted into a fit of laughter. He forgot about the pain in his body for a moment, laughing to his heart's content.

"What are you laughing about you damned brat!?"

"When you're not trying to kill me, you're kind of adorable old man."

Chapter 1257 Are You Sure?

The click of Leonel's hotel room door sounded as it closed once more. Aina's lingering fragrance still hung by his bedside.

He had already lost count of the number of times she had fed him over these last few weeks. Though he was baffled that it was taking him this long to heal, he was even more baffled by her persistence. The two hadn't even exchanged a single word in all this time, she didn't try to speak with him about anything, and it felt as though she had said all the words she wanted to say that day.

She wasn't asking for anything, so Leonel didn't even have something to reject. And, he was stuck in bed like this and hardly had the strength to lift a single finger, and clearly his mother and grandmother had some sort of tacit understanding to avoid this room at all costs. It should have been them nursing him back to health, but here he was in this awkward situation his advancement in brain power seemed to be no help solving.

"Why haven't you fucked her already? What a waste of heaven's treasures."

Leonel choked on air, some of his saliva going down the wrong pipe.

This old man only ever spoke when he initiated conversation, this was the first time he had spoken of his own accord and it completely disrupted Leonel's flow of thoughts, and he actually decided to say something like that.

Leonel didn't even participate in these sorts of conversations with his brothers. Though James had quite the vulgar mouth and never held back when explaining the dirty deeds he got up to, James and he had always had a tacit understanding that Aina was a taboo. Leonel had never tolerated anyone sexualizing the woman he had once loved more than he could describe in words.

'Once...'

Leonel winced, his migraine coming back due to his sudden jolt and coughing spree.

"... Can't you act your age for once? You're just a soul, why do you even have a libido?"

"What do you know, brat? The greatest intimacy you can have is with the soul. Sex with fleshly bodies pales in comparison to the sex I've had with some Spirituals beauties. Your scope is too limited."

"As if they would have sex with human trash like you." Leonel chortled. "Wet dreams don't count no matter how vivid they are, old man."

"Die. All I'm saying is that you're missing out. A Domain would probably only have a handful of seedlings like her. Every generation would be capped at three or four at best."

"Oh? Is she that talented?"

"What talent? I'm talking about beauty, dammit."

Leonel was speechless. Was this really a man who had lived for thousands of years? Where was the maturity? Where was the level headedness?

"I really don't know what to say..."

"Don't say anything, just do. Actually, you don't have to do anything, just lie there, she'll probably be willing to do everything. I don't know how an idiot like you could get so lucky, but I'm going to have an aneurysm if you let her walk in here without saying anything again. You don't even have to marry her, just claim the land as yours. What's wrong with you, are you even a man?"F

Leonel felt a headache coming on. He made a mental note that if he ever was with a woman in the future, he would definitely throw this old man somewhere under lock and key. This old pervert would definitely watch if he had the chance.

"I'm ignoring you."

"What do you know? It makes sense for a man like your dad to gain your mother, but what are you exactly? You need to claim her while she hasn't seen the rest of the world yet."

Leonel coughed. "Why do you keep talking about my dad like you're in love with him? There's nothing good about that old prankster."

If Leonel could see Wise Star Order's face right now, it would be bright red. It seemed he had struck another nerve, but his head was throbbing too much to notice.

"Stop changing the subject, I am being serious. How are you going to lay claim to the Dimensional Verse if you don't have a woman of that caliber by your side?"

Leonel really wanted to roll his eyes, but just opening their lids flooded him with too much sunlight. And, there wasn't much of a point if they were closed to begin with.

First this old man called his dream ridiculous, now he was talking about something completely unrelated to it.

"You're just saying stuff now. Go back to calling me an idiot."

Wise Star Order shook his head. He had been mostly joking around in the beginning, but seeing that Leonel was really so ignorant about these matters, he became more serious.

"It seems you're still too immature, brat. You're not bad at reading a person one on one, but you're lacking the ability to see things on a grand scale."

Leonel raised an eyebrow. He had the whole of Valiant Heart Mountain dancing on his palm years ago. He was just fine at manipulating emotions on a large scale, their entire organization had almost collapsed because of him.

"A beautiful woman, especially one on the level of a Generational Goddess, is more than what she appears on the surface. She's a status symbol. When men see you with her, they respect you. When women see you with her, they want to be her.

"There's no Empire created in history that wasn't built off the back of a Royal FAMILY. The people won't have trust in the Empire unless it has a lineage and a future generation. You can't build anything on that scale by yourself, you'd be naïve to think that you could."

Leonel blinked. The old man did have a point, but that was only something to worry about after the Empire was actually built. Plus...

"Are you sure about that? Whenever men see me with her, they actually want to kill me and take her for themselves."

Chapter 1258 Click

Leonel laughed to himself when he had this thought, it really wasn't much of an exaggeration, actually. In fact, it was entirely true.

He hadn't spent long with this version of Aina by his side. Not long after he had cured her curse back to a level she could manage herself, they entered the Valiant Zone and found themselves separated. Then, after they got out, they were thrust into the situation with the other organizations and the rest went about as poorly as one could imagine.

But, even in that short time, Leonel realized that Aina was always the center of attention when he was around without even trying.

That was just the way the world worked, unfortunately. It was a sort of double edged sword for both men and women.

On one side, there were men who, no matter how handsome they were, had to find their worth in either their personal strength or their wealth. In most cases, a woman wouldn't choose a man purely based on looks in a world like the Dimensional Verse where your death could be lingering around the next corner.

Leonel himself was fairly handsome. Maybe not as handsome as Wise Star Order or Elthor, but that was mostly because he dressed down a lot of the time, hadn't had a haircut he didn't slice with his own blade and years, and couldn't be bothered to worry about useless stuff like looks.

However, even then, he could be considered to be within the top percentile of men and practically no one gave a damn.

On the other hand, there were women who no matter how talented and strong they were, were still measured by how much beauty they were born with.

Leonel had seen this all too often with Aina before her curse had been cured. She was no less powerful than himself, and even more so during most points in their journey. In fact, before his fight with Myghell, Leonel was certain that he could defeat him, but he had no idea if he could do the same with Aina. Maybe only now that his Nodes were being used properly could he say that he had a good chance at beating her. And yet...

All anyone seemed to talk about was how ugly she had been or how beautiful she was now.

When Leonel said he didn't care about Aina's beauty, he had meant it. That wasn't to say that he wasn't enthralled by it, he was a man, after all. It was just that beauty alone wasn't able to move his needle one way or another.

Maybe considering his logical brain, he should be going after the most beautiful woman possible to maximize the good genes his offspring could have. But, Leonel had always felt that a healthy family had to have foundations beyond this.

Wise Star Order shook his head. "That's because you lack status. You can't have a symbol like that by your side and be a weakling."

"Can you stop calling her a symbol already? She's a human being."

"Oh? Are you mad?" Wise Star Order laughed. "I thought you didn't want her."

"That doesn't mean I have to allow her to be disrespected."

"What a foolish little brat. I don't know what I'm going to do with you."

"How about you be useful and tell me why the Universal Cycles are ordered the way they are? It makes no sense."

"... What?"

"What are you confused about? Don't tell me you've never thought it was weird either. Wouldn't it feel better if the order was Natural Light, Four Seasons, Heavenly Body, Constellation, and then finally the Cosmos Realm? Why is it Four Seasons, Heavenly Body, Natural Light, Cosmos, then Constellation? It feels like someone shuffled it into the order than made the least amount of sense."

"..."

Wise Star Order didn't know what to say for a long time. First this kid all but threw down a gauntlet to face the Regulator, now he was doubting a power system that had been the same since the beginning of time. Did he think that things could just be like this by accident?

It was like Leonel went out of his way to make him think that he was crazy. Day after day of this stuff. He might as well go back to being tortured by Leonel's Scarlet Star Force because the shaving down of his lifespan was about the same anyway.

"... The names of the Universal Cycles don't just represent the complexity of the event itself, they represent the inherent importance of the events as well.

"You seem to think that the Night, Day, Dusk and Dawn are lesser than Spring, Summer, Winter and Fall. But, is that true?"

"Night, Day, Dusk and Dawn are constants, or relative constants. No matter what world you're on, they will appear in some form. However, how many places can you think of where only a single Season is experienced? There are many places where a shift between Summer and Winter has no meaning whatsoever. Are the Four Season still beyond the cycle of Light then?"

Leonel's brow furrowed, not answering immediately.

"... But aren't there places where there's only Day as well? If I go to the north pole of Earth, the sun rarely sets. It can go months without experiencing 'night'. And then there's Planet Luxnix. Isn't it always day here too?"

"This three planet rotation is an artificial construct, it isn't part of nature's will. It's just a representation of three greedy families who didn't want to allow any of the others to have a leg up."

Leonel's brows shot up. "You can move planets?!"

"You've been to the Dimensional Cleanse Trial World and have seen the Dyson Sphere, but you're surprised by this? I really don't know what goes on in that head of yours."

Leonel felt that Wise Star Order had a point. It seemed that he was still stuck in the mind frame of an Earthling. If even Earth could terraform their continents and move them about as they please, why wouldn't far higher Dimensional Worlds have methods of moving entire planets?

"But still..." Leonel mumbled. "... The rest doesn't click with me..."

Chapter 1259 Stories in the Skies

"For example, even if I accept that you're right about Night, Day, Dusk and Dawn, what about the others? Why would Natural Light be deemed as above Heavenly Bodies? And why would a Constellation be beyond a Cosmos?"

"Are you doubting me? If I can give you an explanation for one of them, what makes you think I don't have explanations for the others?"

"Much like the Four Seasons, Heavenly Bodies come in a lot of shapes and forms. There is nothing inherently special about them. Technically, the only difference between an asteroid, a moon, a planet and a star is in their mass, they all have the same beginnings, give or take a few differences.

"The Heavenly Bodies you're in awe of are an extraordinarily small portion of them. Most are useless hunks of rock with nothing special about them in the slightest. The fact their name is so grandiose and fantastical is almost a slap in the face of things that would truly be worthy of such names.

"Even a step further, just how easy is it to bend so-called Heavenly Bodies to your own whim? Your people of Earth could already terraform your planet and your moon, you could already excavate asteroids and strip them of their resources. And, though you couldn't form Dyson Spheres of your own yet, you've seen for yourself how possible such a thing is.

"There's nothing more special about it than Natural Light."

Leonel's brow furrowed. "But aren't concepts of night and day, not to mention the seasons, anchored to the existence of heavenly bodies? Aren't they contingent on their existence?"

"That right there is your main problem. You're conflating the Artistic Conception of something with its logical existence in the real world. That isn't the purpose of Universal Cycle comprehension."

"But aren't you doing the same thing to prove me wrong?"

"There's a subtle difference between what you and I are doing. I'm trying to frame things in a way you can understand, but my foundation is still the Artistic Conception. Your foundation, however, is whatever scientific understanding you have of these things.

"When I say the Four Seasons Realm is weak is because it's so fleeting and can appear in a myriad of different ways depending, you see it from the frame of science... The location of the planet, how far it is away from its star, its tilt, etc... However, I'm speaking of its Artistic Conception.

"Winter, to a myriad of people, represents different things. Many have never even seen snow before. Some have never seen anything but snow. Many more don't understand the mild transition of Spring or the slow death of Fall either.

"Because so many don't understand, the Artistic Conception lacks umph and ubiquitousness. However, there isn't a single person who doesn't understand what night and day is. Do you see the difference?"

Leonel's gaze flickered.

So this concept of Artistic Conception was far broader than he originally understood. It wasn't just about how he viewed things, but it was also important to grasp how others viewed it as well.

What gave the Universal Cycles power was the universe itself. Leonel's own perspective wasn't the most important here even though he became the conduit by which it took root and flourished. He had to look at things from the perspective of the whole.

Sparks flew within Leonel's Dreamscape. A vague line connecting Dream Force, Artistic Conception, his own thoughts and that of those around him threatened to erupt.

It felt like it was on the tip of his tongue, but he just didn't have enough information to grasp it. A small part of Leonel told him that had it not been for the vast increase in his computational power, the spark wouldn't have barely lit like this at all.

'This is actually so far beyond me...? I need more, more information...'

"Okay, I can see where you're coming from. It also makes sense that the Cosmos is beyond Natural Light. But what is it about Constellations? How could they be beyond the Cosmos? You said yourself that that stars are only different from planets in their mass, so how is an array of stars any different?"

Wise Star Order sighed.

"I think I preferred the silence more than I thought... I don't know what's so difficult to understand after I laid it all out."

Leonel had already deduced the answer, but that wasn't the point. He had deduced it but his spark didn't light and finish its loop, so he still had no idea what his Dreamscape was trying to tell him. The connection was still vague and sparking, but he just didn't have enough information. He was hoping that something Wise Star Order said could trigger the final jump.

"Just explain it."

Wise Star Order shook his head.

"For as long as life has existed, people have looked up at the skies. It didn't matter what stage of evolution they were at, reaching up was something everyone, regardless of race, gender or culture, strove after.

"Whether it was the most primitive of races all the way up to the most advanced, they all looked up.

"In the infancy of a world, they marked out their gods in the skies. They told tales about what they represented and drew their figures, bowing to them in worship.

"As a world grew, those tales would grow and evolve, often becoming related to a person's sense of self.

"Regardless of the world, the prevalence of religion would fade and right there to replace it would be a Spirituality no Race could seem to escape. Everyone wants to believe in something, even if it sometimes doesn't make sense to.

"Whenever people reach their end of their ropes, the stories in the skies would be there.

"A constellation is no longer about the stars that make them up, they represent something beyond that, the greatest of Universal Cycles, one that relied on a willingness to look up and go beyond."

Leonel's brows furrowed hard, but it had nothing to do with Wise Star Order's words...

'Those words were nice and poetic, old man. Unfortunately, they were absolutely useless.'

Leonel sighed, watching his Dreamscape spark fade away.

Chapter 1260 Free Fall

Weeks more went by before Leonel finally felt alright to swing himself out of bed. In retrospect, he probably should have had someone help him because he crashed onto the floor.

Luckily, his migraine had receded and the pain in his body had become more of a dull soreness, or else he felt like he might have relapsed right then and there.

At first, Leonel thought his muscles had atrophied. It was a pretty common symptom that happened to people that spent long amounts of time injured and bed ridden. However, he found that conclusion to be weird, the main reason being because he wasn't a normal human. It had been about two months, yes, but this shouldn't have been enough to ruin him like this. Unless...

Leonel felt a small panic cause his heart to skip a beat. His Scarlet Star Force Innate Node was now connected to a circuit around his body. Even though he wasn't actively using it, he wasn't actively restricting it anymore either. Could it be that his muscles were being eaten away by its properties?

That day, Leonel had a quarterlife crisis staring at the luxury carpets of his hotel room. Considering his thinking speed, those few seconds would have felt like months to anyone else. Luckily, though, he managed to get a grip on himself.

There were positives to this that he could take away.

For one, he didn't feel any pain, which meant that even if his Scarlet Star Force was causing this, it was more than tolerable.

Secondly, if his body was truly being eaten away at like this, if he fed it with enough nutrients and made up for its deficiencies, he might be able to grow some passive immunity. In that case, maybe the day he could use his own Innate Node freely would come.

With these two pillars of support for his almost broken psyche, Leonel managed to pick himself up. But, that was when something he hadn't expected to happen, happened.

Leonel had fallen to a single knee, so when he went to stand up, he was obviously pushing off of just one leg. He tried to test to see just how bad his muscle weakness had gotten, so he was measuring how much strength he had to push when he suddenly found himself flying sideways.

CRASH!

The sprinkle of glass and the suddenness of open air hit Leonel before he was suddenly freefalling hundreds of meters.

Many who had been outside the hotel at that moment looked up all at once to find a man falling through the skies in nothing more than his underwear. It definitely wasn't the sort of thing you saw everyday.

'...'

Leonel was so stunned that he didn't even react in time.

BOOM!

An enormous dust cloud launched itself into the air, the earth rumbling as though a stone of unfathomable weight had suddenly been dropped onto it.

"Leo?!"

"Cap?!"

A rush of people converged toward the hole on all sides. But, when the dust cleared, they only found a human sized hole and a confused Leonel looking up into the skies as though he couldn't understand what had just happened.

'... Shouldn't that have hurt?' Leonel thought to himself.

Leonel didn't get to finished this thought before the earth suddenly began to raise him up. He didn't need to guess to know that it was Raj who was acting.

"Son of a bitch, Cap. Why are you so heavy?!"

"Why are you asking about useless things?! He could be dead!"

At that moment, a worried Aina came over as Milan's voice cried out to reprimand. In her presence, the boys seemed to become very obedient for some reason. Or, more accurately, reserved, as though they were in the presence of someone they greatly respected.

Leonel, despite his absentmindedness, immediately picked up on this. It was definitely something he found weird, his brothers had never reacted like this to Aina before. Though, now that he thought about it, they didn't really have many opportunities to interact to begin with.

Raj ended up pulling Leonel up all the way out of the five meter deep hole, complaining to himself as he seemed to no longer dare to speak out loud.

When everyone got a good look at Leonel, they were rendered speechless. There wasn't even a single scratch on him. In fact, for some reason, the dirt didn't cling to his body at all. It was whisked away with

the slightest of wind or fell of its own accord, leaving him completely spotless. It was as though Leonel's skin wasn't something they dared to blaspheme.

"Uh, I'm fine. I don't really know how this happened, honestly. One minute I was in the suite, and in the next I was falling through the skies."

Leonel chuckled and tried to use the ground to pull himself up. But, at that moment, the location where his hand had been compressed, violent and raging cracks spreading out in all directions as the ground splintered as though an abyss had opened up beneath it.

Leonel blinked. "... It might be best if you guys didn't touch me right now..."

An awkward silence fell over the group as they nodded slowly, taking a step back. That was just a casual pat to the ground but Raj and the others had almost fallen flat on their faces. Only Aina seemed to have been able to keep her balance without trying very hard.

Leonel's brow furrowed. He had thought his body had experienced atrophy, but this was clearly not the case. If this was atrophy, there wouldn't be any diseases in this world remaining. He wasn't even quite sure how to even go about doing normal things.

This change was a bit too large, even his high class coordination abilities didn't adjust immediately. It seems he would still need a few more days.

"Hey, Cap... About the shirt and pictures... You're not mad, right?"

Raj looked from the destroyed ground, to Leonel, and then back, laughing nervously.